



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING ON THE STREETS IN MWANZA, TANZANIA

Headcount Report
October 2012

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE STREETS OF MWANZA, TANZANIA, HEADCOUNT OCTOBER 2012

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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report contains the findings of a “headcount” of children and young people who work or live on the streets of Mwanza, Tanzania. The purpose of conducting this headcount was to establish the number of street-based children and young people so as to inform ongoing strategic responses for them by various stakeholders.

Railway Children Africa, the key local agencies working with street children in Mwanza and the Social Welfare department make up the partnership “the Integrated Response for Street Children in Mwanza” which is behind this headcount survey. These different partner agencies have observed what appears to be a steady increase of children and young people on the streets, and the current survey attempts to provide valid data to test assumptions about this trend and create a baseline against which to measure changes in the numbers of children on the streets in future years. Periodically quantifying the street children population provides an opportunity to understand the magnitude of the issue and to call various stakeholders to action as they seek to address and support children and young people living alone on the streets.

In this report, the data from the headcount exercise is presented and analysed with lessons learnt, conclusions, and recommendations for future work and data collection. We hope that the data will indicate areas that need to be improved and avenues for new directions for work with children living on the streets.

This 2012 Mwanza Street Children Headcount was coordinated by Railway Children Africa in partnership with StreetInvest, Mwanza City Council, Mwanza Police and charitable organisations in Mwanza. Street Invest and Mkombozi provided training and coaching for the headcount exercise. The participating organisations in the data collection were; Amani Girls Home, Adilisha, Upendo Daima, Caretakers of the Environment (COET), Mwanza Police and Para Social workers . The Regional Social Welfare Office and Mwanza City Council actively supported this headcount exercise.

The headcount survey is based purely on observation and the data represents the population of children and young people on the streets of Mwanza at one particular point in time. This population is subject to periodic shift in size depending on the movement of the children and young people across the city. Despite all this, we are confident that the data from this report provide a useful baseline and guide to the general size of the population.

2.0 BACKGROUND: TANZANIA – CURRENT LAW, POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

Tanzania ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991, and by doing so it committed itself to creating domestic legislation for children. This triggered a lengthy process of reviewing existing laws containing elements concerning children with the ultimate aim of putting in place a Children’s Act. This law reform process eventually led to the enactment of the Law of the Child Act (LCA) in 2009. Even though a number of national policies and programmes on child welfare and development have been in place over the years, the enactment of the Law of the Child was a significant milestone for children’s rights.

A number of regulations have been drafted emanating from the LCA, and several of these are directly relevant to services for children who have ended up on the streets – such as regulations on children’s homes, children’s crisis centres and child protection. Some of these regulations are still in the making. Local authorities and especially social welfare departments at district and ward levels

have the greatest mandate and obligation to implement the LCA and its regulations, partly by utilising and coordinating existing services for children whether these are governmental, non-governmental or private. The official ultimately responsible for fulfilling this duty is the Social Welfare Officer. Specifically, Social Welfare Officers in the local government have the responsibility to:

- assist in the reconciliation between children and their carers
- keep a register of the most vulnerable children (MVC)
- provide assistance and accommodation to children who seem lost, abandoned or seeking refuge
- investigate in collaboration with the police any cases of violations of children's rights.

Actual implementation of the law and its regulations on a local level is still in initial stages in many ways, and there is still a great need for resources and specific implementation plans which can allow for long term changes in the standard of services, procedures and manpower.

Ministries relevant to children in Tanzania (Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare) have shown great commitment to children's issues including the issue of children on the streets over the past few years. This has been evident through a number of joint initiatives with stakeholders from civil society and other government departments such as the ministry responsible for local government authorities. Some examples of this are:

UNICEF – in collaboration with the ministries, local authorities and implementing partners – are developing a child protection model by piloting programmes in a small number of districts. This is a key initiative that aims to implement the LCA on a practical level and inform regulations on child protection. A national multi-sector task force is in the late stages of developing a National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Response on Violence Against Children. In many towns local police authorities have now put in place Gender and Children's desks to cater for the needs of women and children where they come into contact with authorities. The department of Social Welfare now has an established presence at district levels and to some extent at ward levels. In the past Social Welfare Officers only existed in small numbers on a regional level.

The National Plan of Action for Most Vulnerable Children (NCPA) has been key in addressing the urgent situation of child vulnerability across the country over the past few years – the Department of Social Welfare in partnership with NGOs managed to reach 857,118 children across the country during the plan's first phase. An evaluation and review process of this plan took place in 2012 with the aim of renewing the plan for 2013-17. One of the critiques that emerged about the NCPA as it was implemented in its first phase was that it did not include coverage for children who are out of home i.e. those who live in care, prisons or on the streets. Furthermore, it did not include violence against children at home as a vulnerability factor and did not touch upon the issue of child protection, rather it focussed predominately on meeting children's material and educational needs. A consultation process for the NCPA in its second phase showed commitment from both government and civil society to address these areas among others, and improve linkages to other policies and regulations mentioned above. Railway Children Africa participated actively in the consultation process with the aim of ensuring that street connected children are considered in the plan so that interventions for the same may be recognised and coordinated within its implementation for the next five years. In February 2013 the NCPA II was launched by the government in Dodoma.

3.0 BACKGROUND: MWANZA

According to the 2002 National Census¹, Mwanza has a total population of 476,646 (Nyamagana District 210,735 and Illemela 265, 911). The current population is estimated to be just above half a million people with an annual natural growth rate of 3.2% and rural to urban immigration almost 8% (National Population Causes 2002). The population density is 134 people per sq. km, being the second in the country after Dar es Salaam.

Many people in Mwanza (70%) live in the unplanned settlements. These settlements lack basic facilities like roads, schools and water. Some of them are located on very steep rocky hills; reaching them and providing basic sanitation systems becomes very difficult. According to a report on street life in urban Tanzania², urban growth has resulted in an increase in unsupervised children either living alone or working on the urban street. Mwanza is no exception; the rate of urban population growth has been rising resulting in an increase in the number of children and young people working and living on the streets.

In 2012, 17,776 Most Vulnerable Children were identified within Mwanza City Council communities (Mwanza City Council, 2012). We know that many of the children on the streets counted in our survey are not included in this number. Equally, many of the identified MVCs across Mwanza are potentially at risk of going to the streets.

3.1 THE NEED FOR DATA ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING ON THE STREETS

A global study of children on the streets conducted by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2012) concludes that the actual global number of children who depend on the streets for their survival is not known, and that numbers collected often fluctuate due to conditions in the environment. Terminologies and definitions used during local surveys also differ. The partnership behind the current headcount in Mwanza finds that surveys carried out at a local level, and which directly relate their methods and data to local services, plans and stakeholders, can indeed be utilised meaningfully.

Partners behind the current survey see the importance of regular data collection so that we may know the true nature and extent of the phenomenon of children and young people living and working on the streets of Mwanza. We are aware that there is an on-going national as well as international discourse which implies that the situation of children on the streets is constantly growing and is out of control. However, we believe that the situation is manageable if services can be adapted to these children's needs and take into account the statistics with which we are presented, and by working together with key stakeholders in implementing national programmes and regulations. Knowing the number and basic characteristics of these children, and how these change over time, is a necessary step in planning and monitoring effective service provision.

¹ <http://www.lakezonedesire.com/Zones/Mwanza%20City%20Profile.pdf>

² <http://www.streetwise-africa.org/mss/pdf/mwanza.pdf>

3.2 EXAMPLES OF PREVIOUS SURVEYS

Several surveys of children on the streets have previously been carried out in specific towns in Tanzania by using different methods, including, but not limited to the following:

Mkombozi, an NGO operating in Moshi and Arusha towns, has carried out several surveys starting in 2006 to obtain statistics of children and young people on the streets. These surveys applied a method where interviews were conducted with children and young people available during a 12 hour period. The most recent survey, carried out in 2010, counted a total of 1108 children and young people in the two towns combined, with a total of 261 of these being on the streets full time. The findings showed a significant decrease of children and young people in Arusha town since the latest count, and an increase in Moshi.

Railway Children and several local partners in Mwanza carried out a similar survey in 2008, revealing that 392 children and young people were living full time on the streets. The majority came from homes with either single parents or grandparents, and economic hardship at home was identified as the leading causal factor for them coming to the streets. Domestic violence was almost as common in triggering a child's move from home. Just over a quarter had never attended school, while 45% had dropped out. Note that this number was derived from a different methodology than that of the current survey, and we can therefore not directly compare the results of the two.

3.3 COMPLEMENTARY WAYS OF COLLECTING EVIDENCE

The Mwanza partnership sees regular headcounts as an appropriate way of obtaining purely quantitative statistics for a specific point in time. This is however only one way of surveying the situation and we recognise the need for other types of data collection to complement this. In 2012 we began to systematically collect statistics of children arriving to the streets of Mwanza, through our street workers and the initial efforts of counting over a few months showed that between 10 and 20 children arrive on to the streets of Mwanza alone and in need of assistance every month. It is furthermore in our plans to set up a register which identifies and tracks children who are on the streets so as to complement Social Welfare's efforts to register all most vulnerable children in the community. Lastly, children who enter our services leave behind a record of information including their place of origin and issues faced in the home and family. This type of qualitative data can be utilised in various ways to research the issue over time depending on information needs of local agencies. We believe that the combination of these methods should put us in a good position to monitor the situation in real time as well as over time and directly relate it to our service provision and its potential impact.

4.0 HEADCOUNT METHODOLOGY

The Headcount methodology is a technique for collecting quantitative data regarding the numbers of street connected children. Its main aim is to survey the population of street connected children within a specific geographical locality. This is different from other forms of quantitative data collection in that it doesn't use sampling in any way. The methodology seeks to gain data on *all* observed street connected children within a geographic locality. Therefore the technique mitigates some of the statistical dogma that goes with many quantitative surveys and analyses such as averages and estimations. This technique was pioneered by Patrick Shanahan from the organisation StreetInvest during his work in Ghana in the 1980s and 1990s and has more recently been used in a UNICEF commissioned study in Addis and Adama in Ethiopia (2010) and in a national headcount in Sierra Leone (2011). Furthermore, the headcount methodology has also been applied in a Barclays Bank funded survey of Kumasi, Ghana, in 2013.

The skill and experience of the counters is of critical importance. With a methodology centred on observation the ability of the counters to accurately identify the target groups is fundamental to the success of the exercise. Ideally all participants should be experienced street workers but in practice this is often difficult to achieve, and this was the case in this headcount. The participants were a mix of street workers, other NGO workers, para social workers and police. However, all the teams included experienced, local street workers.

During the data collection, participants walk in groups and, using their observational skills, they count children and young people in their selected area. There is no interaction with the target groups during the counting process.

The area to be counted, in this case Mwanza, is divided into walkable zones and the wider team is divided into groups, each group with its own group leader. Each group is allocated a zone, which they count a first time. For the second count, groups swap zones. By swapping zones, groups are given the chance to make findings that were possibly overlooked in the first count. Having shared experiences, groups then return to their original zone for a third and final count, the results of which are accepted as the final figures. The third count is considered the most accurate because new discoveries may have been made, mistakes will have been rectified and misunderstandings clarified and the skill of counters in identifying the target groups will have been enhanced over the previous two counts. Although the data from the last day is taken as the final figure to be presented in the report, this data is cross referenced against the other two data sets to see if there are any large discrepancies which might require more exploration or further headcounts. Having three sets of data to compare from each area covered adds a significant amount of validity to the final data set presented. Even so, it is accepted that it is often difficult to pinpoint a child's age or, indeed, whether he or she should be counted as a child living on the street. To mitigate this difficulty on-going communication and discussion between groups are central to the counting process. By travelling in groups, the counters are able to consult with each other when in doubt over a child's identification.

The counting itself is preceded by four days of training where all headcounters are introduced to some basic street work methodologies and principles. The areas of the city that will be covered are agreed in the training and a schedule drawn up by participants taking in to account different times of day that are most relevant for the exercise. A significant amount of time is also spent discussing the categorisation of children to try and ensure as consistent interpretation of observations as possible across all groups and individuals within the groups. Equally significant time is put into participants

challenging each others findings in order to agree on the most 'true' set of figures. This part of the methodology is critical although admittedly it was highlighted as a challenge in Mwanza.

4.1 LIMITATIONS OF THE METHODOLOGY

In counting street children, no methodology can be 100 per cent accurate. It is virtually impossible to know that every child living and working on the street has been accounted for. What the methodology utilised in this study can verify is that, at the point of counting, the children presented in the final figures were observed on the streets.

The methodology could be criticised for its lack of participation with the children themselves. However, to have adopted a more participatory approach that included street connected children in the counting process would have been to run the risk of the results being prejudiced by the children themselves. For example, a street connected child may be predisposed to warn friends to make themselves scarce during the counting process, or mislead the counters as to the areas which the children frequent.

Determining the age of children from observation alone is challenging. Aside from making the counting process more difficult, adding further age categorisations to the methodology increases the risk of inaccuracy in the results. However, the use of observation only is also one of the strengths that can be attributed to the methodology. Street workers in the areas in which we work have found that when interviewed to obtain further data some children feel that they are being "used" when participating in surveys and /or documentaries, and that they do not actually benefit from their involvement in the way they would like and expect to.

For the purposes of this headcount each child or young person observed was placed into one of the categories that were agreed upon as defining how they spend their time so as to avoid double counting. On reflection this approach is limiting in the amount of information that we were able to gather as it is possible that some children could actually fall in to more than one of the categories.

5.0 MWANZA HEADCOUNT PROCESS 2012

The headcount exercise took place over a ten day period, with four days training and six days of the actual headcount. Prior to the training, 24 counters were identified and selected from organisations in Mwanza. The criteria for selecting the team was mainly people who have the experience of working with children living and working on the streets. Out of the 24 counters, two were police officers from the police child desk; four were para-social workers that are working in various wards in Mwanza and the rest were staff and volunteers from four charitable organisations namely: Upendo Daima, Amani Girls Home, COET and Adilisha.

Prior to the actual headcount, all the participants undertook a headcount and street work training: Introduction to Street Work. This was done to give participants a chance to reflect on the challenges that our communities face with regard to street connected children and make them see the need for having best approaches on how to work with street connected children and proper data concerning them. The topics covered in the training included street work in context, approaches to working with children, stages of street work, street mapping and observation.

Behaviours of data collectors or street workers who are disdainful of or fail to understand the children and young people on the street do not complement the headcount approach and so time was spent on attitudes and values in the training prior to the headcount practices. In the training emphasis was put especially on making participants think more about the individuality of each child and focus on the need to work with street connected children in an approach that gives a priority to the individualism of the street connected child – his/her wants, needs, rights, fears, hopes, strengths, family relationships and so on, which will be different for each child. As part of the training the team engaged in a discussion to agree on the categories for recording the data.

A map of Mwanza was obtained from the city council's planning office to assist the facilitators in dividing the city into four walkable zones. The counters were divided into four groups, each group with 6 members, and a leader was identified in each group. A zone was assigned to each group and each team agreed which streets to cover in their zone based on the street workers' knowledge of where most children are found. They also agreed on the times to go to the streets each day. This information was then shared with the facilitators, to know when and where each group would be operating from. Counters were equipped with an identity card, a small notebook and a pen to carry with them while on the streets.

There were debriefing sessions every second day of the headcount to discuss observations made in specific areas, challenges encountered and lessons learnt. These sessions were helpful in the swapping process; the groups debriefed on specific things that the group they were swapping with needed to pay attention in each of the zones. The team leader was responsible for compiling and presenting the data with the final figures every second day to the facilitators and raising notable points.

Once the findings were compiled, a meeting was held among the partners to analyse them. Their assumptions, reflections and analysis largely make out the content of the sections below.

This report was a collaborative effort put together by a selected team among the partners behind the survey and it has been open for validation from all stakeholders in draft form.

5.1 MWANZA 2012 HEADCOUNT CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS:

Those involved in the headcount process adopted the description of street connected children proposed by StreetInvest which would help in defining the group relevant to the headcount: ***“Any child whose life is controlled by the street is a street child”***.

The age range agreed was between 0 and 20 yrs. It was felt that anyone above the age of 20 was an adult and need not fall within the category of children and young people. According to Tanzanian law, a child means a person aged less than eighteen years.

The team agreed to divide the children and young people by:

- Age group (0–6yrs; 7–10yrs; 11–14yrs; 15–18yrs; 19–20yrs) and
- Physical ability (non disability or with disability) and
- Gender

They also allocated the following categories dependent on the activity the children and young people were engaged in at the point of counting.

It's worth noting that recording children into age groups and the categories below is not an exact science but purely relies on the data collector's observation of how a child appears to them, and what the child is engaged with at the time of counting.

Fixed business – a child working with any kind of business that is settled in a given location, e.g. selling cashew nuts or other basic consumer items or working in a fixed retail premises.

Moveable business – a child moving from one place to another with some form of items to sell e.g. water, nuts, bananas etc.

Begging – any child asking for food or money as a means of survival.

Jobless living on streets – a child who is not engaged in any kind of income generating activity at the point of counting. Based on our experience, this is the category that represents children and young people that are full time on the streets.

Commercial sex workers (CSWs) – a child either engaging in or advertising herself with a view to engaging in transactional sex. These girls are generally observed at night in strategic locations, although some have also been counted during the day. They are usually identifiable through a combination of their attire, behaviour, and location. This category builds on the assumptions of the street workers and their knowledge of locations for where girls are commonly found engaged in commercial sex work.

Girls with babies – girls found on the streets carrying or with babies.

Pregnant girls– girls observed to be pregnant.

Note that it is difficult through observation alone to determine how many children actually sleep on the streets and how many only come to the streets to work. One of the changes we intend to make to the process in 2013 is to ensure that all groups carry out some counting in the late evening or early morning when it is clear whether children are sleeping on the streets. This was only done by one of the groups during this headcount and only up until 9pm. We have however made the assumption, based on local experience, that the category of “jobless” children are generally those who are on the streets full time and thus we have made this parallel throughout the text.

6.0 HEADCOUNT 2012 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The following are the key findings of the 2012 headcount exercise in Mwanza. They are presented together with analysis and reflection by the partners, including data collectors responsible for carrying out the survey, based purely on their working experience and knowledge of children on the streets of Mwanza.

6.1 NUMBER OF CHILDREN LIVING AND WORKING ON THE STREETS

AGES	0 to 6		7 to 10		11 to 14		15 to 18		19 to 20		SUB TOTAL		TOTAL	%
CATEGORIES	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
FIXED BUSINESS	3	5	9	3	62	56	82	42	131	13	287	119	406	21.46
MOVABLE BUSINESS	14	4	70	10	236	27	227	29	158	3	705	73	778	41.12
JOBLESS LIVING ON STREETS.	30	17	38	6	203	13	184	18	84	2	539	56	595	31.45
CASUAL/ DAILY WORKERS	1	4	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	4	4	8	0.423
BEGGING	6	2	18	8	22	1	1	0	1	0	48	11	59	3.277
CSW	0	0	0	9	0	19	0	7	0	2	0	37	37	1.956
GIRLS WITH BABIES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	6	0.317
PREGNANT GIRLS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GRAND TOTAL	54	32	135	36	523	116	497	96	374	25	1,583	305	1,888	100.003

The first important result of the headcount is the size of the population of the children and young people living and working on the streets of Mwanza. Between 11th October 2012 and 18th October 2012, the headcount identified a total of 1,888 children and young people living and/or working on the streets of Mwanza. Again, this number simply represents children and young people that were counted at specific times when the counters were on the streets and in specific streets; we can therefore assume that a number of children and young people were not counted.

6.2 AGE RANGE

The majority of those counted were between the ages of 11 and 14 years with 639 children counted within this age range. Of these, 523 were boys and 116 were girls.

In our experience, many children who arrive to the streets are aged 11 to 14, and the concentration of this age group could have several explanations. First, this is an age where children undergo many changes – adolescence and puberty starts and, increasingly, they begin to form an identity and become more independent. It is possible that this leads them to question their situation (at home) to a greater extent, and some will be less keen to listen to their parents' instructions and demands. Some will have a bigger need than previously to proactively change their situation. In homes that are crowded, sleeping arrangements such as co-sleeping with opposite sex parents or siblings often become more difficult to accept. Other key factors are at play at this age: financial constraints of families will make it necessary for children in this age group to start working to contribute to the family income – this can especially be the case with boys, and even more so where the father is absent. Partners have found a lack of access to education to be a key factor for this age group to come to the streets. Having to drop out of school due to financial reasons, or failing the final exams of primary school, severely limits the future options for this age group. When failing primary school

exams, it is no longer an option for a student to go to an affordable government secondary school, and private secondary schools are impossible for most poor families to afford. Lastly, street workers generally experience a significant rise in this age group when school closes for holidays or weekends – children come to town areas for recreation or work, and this can be seen as an indication that there are certain problems. This headcount was carried out from Monday to Saturday during term time. There were no significant differences in numbers of children counted on any day of the week.

There were 257 children aged under 11 years in the headcount, with 189 boys and 68 girls.

For children aged 7 to 10 there is a concentration of male children engaged in moving businesses. These are often the boys found selling plastic bags in market areas etc. and in our experience these are often out-of-school children in poor households who are sent to town by their families to work for the family's survival. Many will return home at night, and a number of these are likely to be gradually drawn into street life full time. For boys even at this age to contribute to the family's income is still normal cultural practice in many communities.

Of particular concern is the high number of children under 6 years of age on the streets of Mwanza – 86 were counted in total. Twenty-six of these were counted in either moveable or fixed business, 13 as casual workers or beggars and 47 were found "jobless". Based on the categorisation used in this headcount, the jobless category represents those that are full time on the streets – it could however be argued that categories related to work or income generation do not always apply to this young group.

In our experience in Mwanza it is not particularly common for children at this young age to make the decision to run away from home and enter into street life. Some of this population can be assumed to be living on the streets with their parents, and some may have been abandoned or lost at an early age. It may be that some of these very young children have been chased away from their homes by members of the family – in our experience this can for example happen where negative relationships with step parents are at play. Also, it is sometimes found that small children of this age group may have been brought by an older sibling who is already on the streets, with the intention of helping or saving them from the situation they face at home.

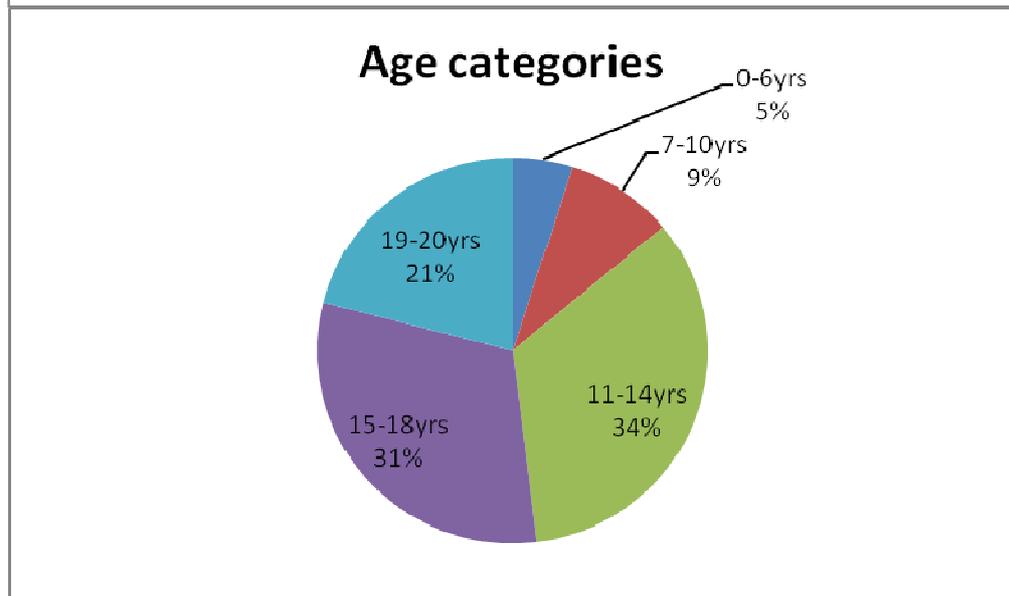
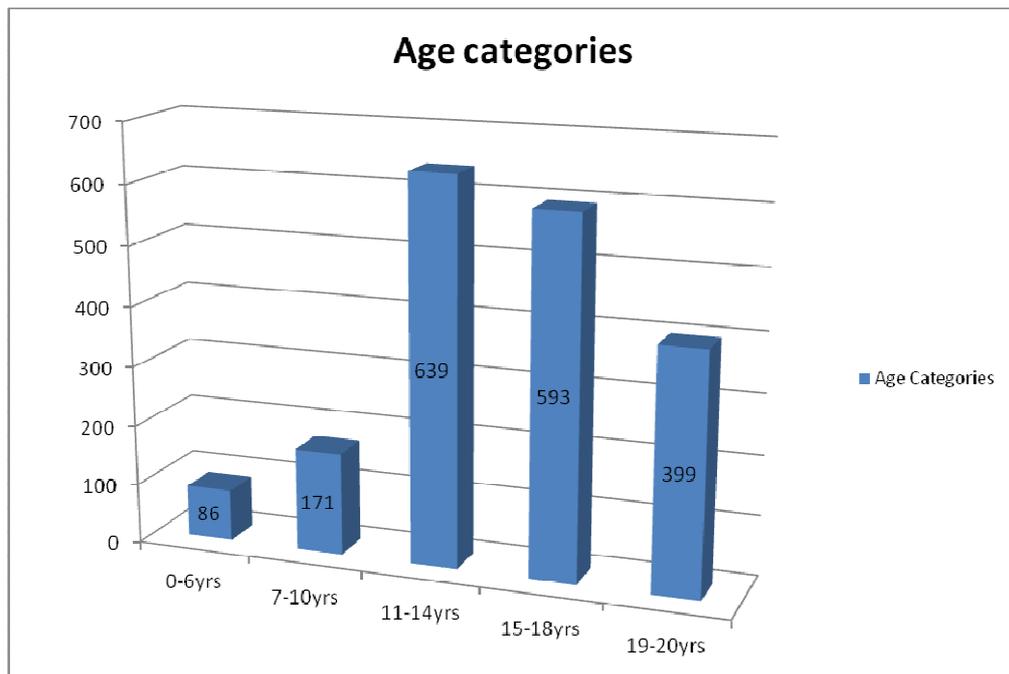
For this age group of jobless children we expect that some of them will be drifting to the streets in the day and will have homes to go back to at night. Irrespective of whether these children are sleeping on the streets or not, they represent an extremely vulnerable group.

There are a significant number of young people on the streets of Mwanza. Between the ages of 15 to 18 years 497 males and 96 females were counted. In the 19 to 20 age range, 374 males and 25 females were counted.

It is worth noting that young people can be experienced as more difficult to count than the younger children. This is because one can arguably say that all younger children on the streets are relevant for us to count due to the risk they face of being on the streets at such a young age, no matter why they are there. For young people on the other hand, there are many young people who are in town areas for various reasons but who are living mainstream lives. Keeping this in mind the data collectors had to make a number of extra considerations. When counting older young people in particular, there were distinctions made between young people simply seen working or spending time on the streets and those appearing to be young people who are more street involved and/or living on the streets. Data collectors with long experience of street work based this count on their

experience of the street connected young people in particular – their awareness of individuals or groups, their demeanour and behaviour, the types of activities they were engaged in etc, in order to more accurately interpret whether they should be counted as 'street connected young people' and not just young people who work in town.

In our experience, a significant portion of these older street connected young people have grown up on the streets from a young age and many of them are well known to organisations and their street workers. Due to their long history of street life and other complex factors at play in their lives, working with them to change their lifestyle is identified by agencies as extremely challenging.



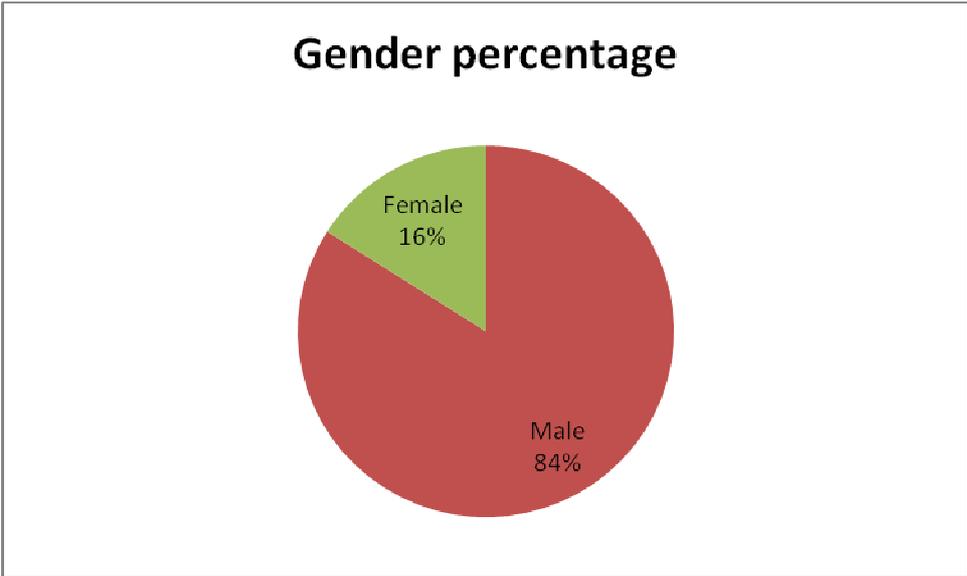
6.3 GENDER BREAKDOWN AND FEMALE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This headcount indicates that of the 1,888 children and young people counted, 84% were male and 16% were female. When broken down into 'child' and 'young people' categories the gender breakdown is very similar to that of the group as a whole.

The gender of children and young people on the streets in Mwanza is important. In the experience of local organisations across the country, girls are not commonly found actually living on the streets – it is often assumed that girls who run away will not sleep outside due to the dangers that females face, and will rather “disappear” into domestic work or sex work where they live with their employers. It is not known whether girls run away from home less frequently than boys, and more research is needed on this topic. Mwanza, however, can be seen to have a reasonably high population of street-living girls in comparison to other town areas – this is certainly evidenced by the above mentioned surveys from Moshi and Arusha towns.

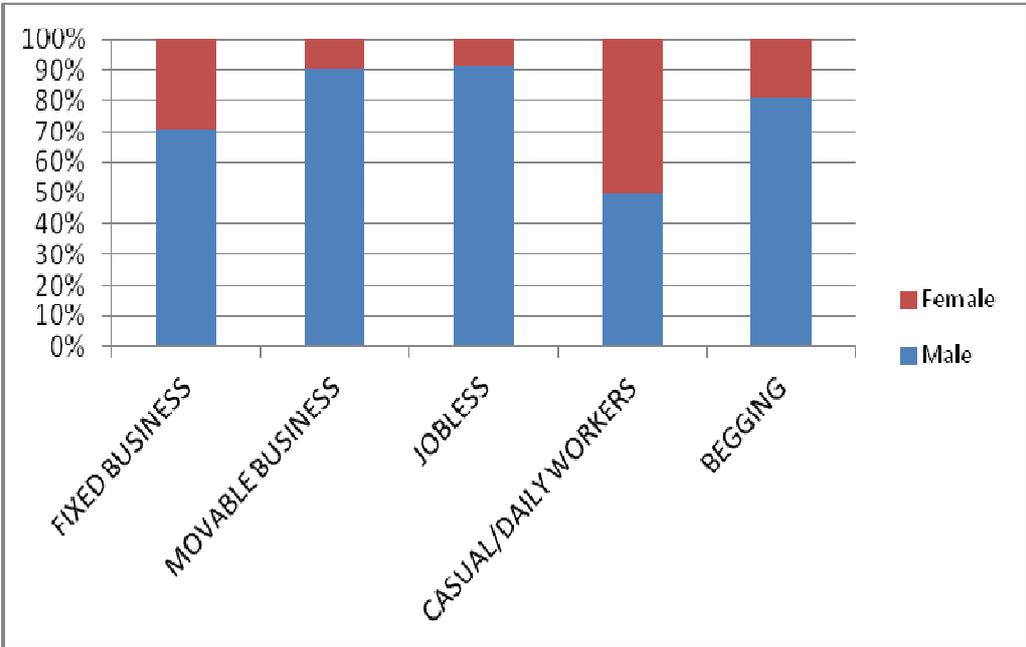
In the context of this survey, it is important to mention that in our experience of working with girls, the vast majority who live on the streets or who are deeply involved in street life do become involved in commercial sex work to some extent. Many of these girls will only be visible or identifiable during the evening or night in town areas in locations that are common for begging or commercial sex work. Unfortunately, this headcount only partially covered such areas in the night time and we can therefore safely say that there are a significant hidden number of street-involved girls who were not counted this time. There is need for further data collection on this group in particular.

Sixteen girls were counted on the street with their babies. Over the 2 years prior to this survey, partners have experienced an increase in young girls on the streets becoming pregnant and sometimes raising their babies while still being based on the streets. A response has been created for reaching out to these girls through a joint effort within our partnership. As such we chose to include in the survey the categories of pregnant girls and girls with babies so as to help us understand the extent of the issue. The final data does not however show any pregnant girls due to these simply not having been visible for counting at the time of the survey. Still, at the time of the survey, a small number of pregnant girls on the streets were actually receiving services within our partnership.



6.4 LIVELIHOOD ACCORDING TO GENDER

In terms of categories, there are clear distinctions between the activities commonly undertaken by girls and the roles more commonly assumed by boys. Generally, more girls were counted engaging in fixed or casual work, while significantly more boys were counted as jobless or engaged in moveable business. Notably more boys were found jobless on the streets while the number of casual daily workers was roughly equal.



6.5 AGE CATEGORIES ACCORDING TO GENDER

According to this headcount the percentage of girls on the streets in relation to that of the boys decreases as the age categories go up. There is a possibility that activities, and therefore visibility, change as the girls grow older, and as such, the current survey may have counted fewer older girls due to the data collection being mainly conducted during day time.

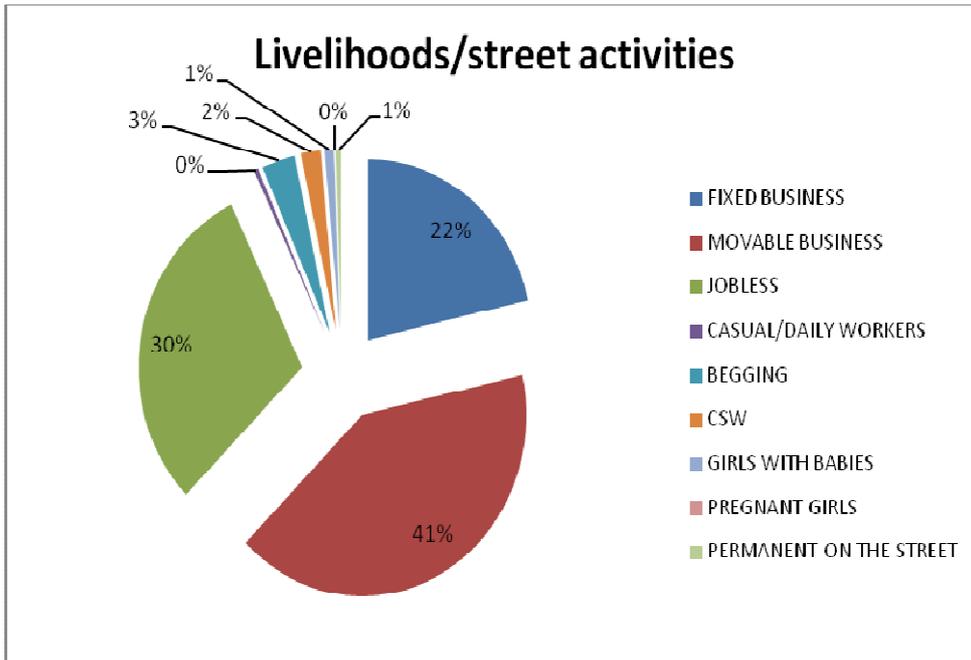
	Male	%	Female	%	Total
0-6yrs	54	63.22	32	36.78	86
7-10yrs	135	78.95	36	21.05	171
11-14yrs	523	81.78	116	18.22	639
15-18yrs	497	83.81	96	16.19	593
19-20yrs	374	93.73	25	6.27	399
	1,583	83.83	305	16.17	1,888

6.6 LIVELIHOODS

In terms of the activities undertaken by the children at the point of counting, the most populous category was those involved in *moveable business*, accounting for 41%. Twenty-two percent were in the *fixed business* category. Together these two categories represented 63% of the number of children and young people living and working on the streets of Mwanza.

Thirty percent of the children observed were in the *jobless category – living on the streets*. These are the children who at the point of counting were not engaged in any income generating activity. As mentioned further above, based on the observations and experience of the street workers carrying out the survey, we have assumed that the vast majority of this group is living full time on the streets.

Fifty-nine children, just over 3% of all those counted, were counted while begging. As this number may seem low in comparison to the total population counted, it is worthwhile mentioning that street workers in our partnership have experienced that begging is an activity which is becoming less and less common among the children. The Mwanza community seems to have become less tolerant and sympathetic towards begging children on the streets over the past few years, and as such, it has been observed that more children these days perform some form of work in order to earn money.



6.7 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY

Just 3 disabled children were counted during the headcount: 2 boys and 1 girl in the 11 to 14 age range. The number seems surprisingly low. The partners found this interesting since it may be assumed that children with disabilities are pushed away from their families – something which one can argue is proven incorrect according to these findings. Partners concluded that children with disabilities are most commonly kept or even “hidden” at home with the family, and as such, disability is not seen as a factor for children to come to the streets.

6.8 CONCENTRATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE STREETS ACCORDING TO AREA

Areas covered	Number of children and young people on the streets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Igoma Stand and Market • Nyakato National Stand • Nyakato Market • Nyakato Buzungura Stand • Mabatini • Mecco Stand • Uhuru • Mlango Mmoja • Rufuji • Mata Street • Wamasia area 	764

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rwagasore Road • Pamba Road • Makabuli Ya Waislam • Bugarika • Soko Kuu • Sahara Stand • Nyegezi stand • Machijioni-Igoma • Bugando 	423
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Police • Kamanga Ferry • Mahakama • Capri Point • Railway Station • Lumumba Road • New Mwanza Hotel • Seif Plaza 	327
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirumba- Mwaloni Street • Kirumba- Market street • Kemono-Traffic Light • Simba Cafe • Kamanga Street • Masai Bridge • Custom • Mirongo Street • Mirongo Market street 	374

7.0 LOCATIONS

The general observation by the headcounters was that the children would normally be found in three places: where they eat, sleep and where they go for recreational activities. It was observed that most children were found at market places, dumpsites, at the lake and bus stands. At the market places the children were either looking for food, or engaged in activities to enable them get some money. At the bus stands, this would be the entry point for children coming from outside the city or some children would be involved in carrying luggage for people for a small fee.

- At Igoma and Nyegezi, the two main bus stands where the long distances buses stop, the headcounters found many school going age children that were believed to have come from the rural areas and were now either involved in some form of work to get money or begging.
- In Kirumba a high number of children were observed. The headcounters believed that the children around this area came from a nearby settlement (residential area) to look for food and would normally go back home at the end of the day.
- Around the bus stands and market areas, there were an overwhelming number of children that were moving around. This made it difficult to count them and increased the risk of double counting. In these locations, the data collectors observed an increase of the number

of children after 2pm mainly because some children who had gone to school in the morning came to the streets in the afternoon, either to go to the market or sell things on the streets.

- The participation of street workers in the headcount was crucial as it helped identify spots where children could be found. For example, in a certain area a good number of children were found under a bridge and would probably have been left uncounted had the data collectors not had prior awareness of this location.

When the headcount is carried out in future years we will record and collate the data for each specific area in which the headcount is carried out as it is clear that this information would also be useful.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Children aged 0–6

These very young children are a group that should be given high priority within our programmes and, they are in fact already prioritised for placement and protection in residential centres if and when possible. *There is more investigation needed around whether the majority of these children are on the streets with their parents, or whether they are more commonly alone* – these two groups will require two separate responses. The former would most likely require intense efforts for whole families (most often mother and child) to transition from street life to residing and making a living in the community, and the latter group would need options of family reunification where possible or long term care if not.

Children above infancy age and under the age of 6, who are on the streets with their mothers/families, either part time or full time, are currently not targeted by our services even though they are a group at high risk of continuing street life throughout their childhood. *There is a need to strategise for a response for this group around how they might fit into existing family work and support and, in some cases, explore the possibility of some children being placed in long term care homes in Mwanza if the situation demands it.*

Children aged 7–14 and jobless - full time on the streets

Children aged 7–10 and 11–14 and who are on the streets full time fall into groups where an appropriate response in most cases would be to work to improve the family situation so that these children can ultimately return home. This group is of an age where going to school and being raised by their parents or extended family is both normative and the best option as long as the quality of both physical and emotional care they would receive in their homes is good enough. Children on the lower side of the age bracket should be especially prioritised during street work so that they may be brought to safety in residential centres while we work with their families – young children who live on the streets are at particularly high risk of violence with very little chance to defend themselves. Organisations within our partnership already put their main focus into this group as per these recommendations.

Children aged 7–14 and earning an income on the streets

Children of the same age categories as above, but who generally come to the streets during the day to earn an income while living with their families, require a different response. The prevalence of so many children in this category can lead us to the assumption that the poverty level in many families around Mwanza is compelling. It may very well be that these children come from families where different factors have restricted their caregivers from earning sufficient income to meet the basic needs of their family, and as a result, children drop out of school and are required to help the family earn an income by coming to town and engaging themselves in different activities. These children are not only at risk of having their life opportunities compromised, but are also at great risk of transitioning into street life full time. Therefore, efforts for this group need to *target the whole family with a focus on raising their income levels and at the same time creating opportunities for these children to go to school before the situation gets any worse.*

This group has not particularly been in focus for organisations of the Mwanza partnership. During 2013-15 we are however undertaking family-based work that targets households where children are out of school or at risk of dropping out and who live in extreme poverty. In some cases, *we should identify street-working children who live in the local communities targeted by our efforts and include their families in the programme.*

Female children and young people

In general, female children on the streets are particularly vulnerable to different forms of abuse and exploitation, and run a high risk of becoming pregnant. They are commonly engaged in commercial sex work during the night. As such, prioritising them in street work and protecting them through temporary shelter is crucial especially if they are on the streets full time.

The survey counted a significant number of younger girls - 184 - under the age of 14. The knowledge and experience of local street workers tells us that a good number of street-based girls can commonly be found in or outside of guesthouses or other locations typical for commercial sex work – such locations at relevant times of the night were largely outside the scope of this survey.

There is a need for further data collection on street-based girls engaged in commercial sex work during the late evening and night. This would partly require extending our regular street work to pay frequent visits to known guest houses and other locations during late evening and night time. There is a need to strategise about how to best contact this group since doing so at night would mean a security risk for the project worker. Furthermore, *our current street work for these girls is limited and should be organised more effectively into street work plans across the partnership.*

Girls who are pregnant or with babies

As mentioned above, we are aware that there is constantly a population of girls who are pregnant or who are based on the streets while raising an infant even if the method of this headcount did not necessarily capture their presence. This group requires a two-fold approach where the mother and baby are worked with together, placing emphasis on necessary medical care, nutrition and protection for the babies while at the same time working with the mother towards changing her lifestyle. The approach much also include helping young girls through their pregnancy and ensuring a safe delivery.

A collaborative effort for this group already exists within our partnership in its early stages. However, in order to improve and eventually upscale this effort *we need to gain more knowledge on the prevalence of street connected girls who are involved in commercial sex work and to what extent these carry on the same lifestyle despite being pregnant or raising an infant.*

Young people aged 15–20

Most interventions on the streets target younger children, and young people in their late adolescence or early adulthood are often not prioritised. The data collected shows us that young people of the ages 15–18 and 19–20 are a significantly large group. We know from experience that many of these young people have been on the streets for a number of years, and that they are often very difficult to work with due to the problematic behaviours they have developed. Still, there is a great need to work with this group considering they exist in hundreds within Mwanza. *Efforts targeted at young people need to be street-based and focus on rehabilitation from destructive behaviours together with providing opportunities for skills development and income generation.*

Mwanza organisations have historically worked with a very limited number of young people who are based on the streets, but during 2013-15 around 300 young people will be targeted with the objective of helping them to achieve self-reliance and leave street life. Partners in Mwanza will provide this support to young people by introducing the ‘association model’, a street connected young people development programme which has been pioneered by the Undugu Society of Kenya.

Locations and street work

The results of this headcount point to the need for increased street based work which builds on strategic selection of locations and targeted groups of children. It also shows that there is need to frequently visit areas that have been identified to have a high concentration of children living and working on the streets, such as bus stands, market places etc. Stakeholders in such town areas should be sensitised to look out for new or particularly vulnerable children and contact project staff so that these may be referred to appropriate services.

The Mwanza Integrated Response partnership needs to include more organisations that in one way or another can provide services to the children and young people on the streets. The high numbers of children on the streets calls for more resources and services that can best be provided by different stakeholders to ensure the interventions are sustainable and cost effective. Systematically organising our services and referrals so that children who arrive to the streets can be connected to a worker/agency, strengthening outreach activities to be more effective and adapted to the needs of children, and creating consensus in the network of the approach are some of the aspects that we need to work to improve going forward.

9.0 CONCLUSION

This survey counted a total of 1888 children and young people living and/or working on the streets of Mwanza. We believe that some stakeholders and readers of this report may find this number to be high, and others to be low.

We cannot determine whether this number represents an overall increase or decrease of children and young people during the past few years since no other survey has been carried out before using

this methodology. Rather it offers a baseline against which to measure the numbers of coming surveys so that we may learn about trends over time. Outside the scope of this headcount, we do however know from ongoing data collection by street workers that there is a constant flow of new children arriving to the streets of Mwanza every month. We are currently in the process of establishing a fair picture of the magnitude of this flow through recording the identities and numbers of new children on a monthly basis – and what we have recorded so far is indeed of great concern.

This survey shows the presence of a significant number of children and young people in each and every age group counted, with a higher concentration of children aged 11–14 followed by those aged 15–18. Overall their presence and their situation testify of the urgent need to strengthen, resource and upscale programmes and services for child protection as well as social and economic strengthening of families and communities. The recommendations of this report mainly aim to provide guidance in how to respond to the situation of children and young people being on the streets rather than to prevent it, and as such, some of the key lessons and calls for actions it leaves us with are the following:

- We have learnt that there is a significant population of very young children aged 0–6 which our partnership is largely not reaching at the moment. We would urge other organisations to place focus on working with this group and their families whether on the streets together or not.
- The presence of the children aged 7–10 and 11–14 who come to the streets to work rather than being in school call for services that target vulnerable families. The community-based family work in our partnership, as well as efforts of other organisations including those under the National Plan of Action for Most Vulnerable Children, should prioritise the families of children who have already dropped out of school and who now come to town during the day to beg and/or work for their survival.
- There is need to learn more about the numbers of girls who live or work on the streets, and to what extent these are involved in commercial sex work during the night in town areas. We suspect that the majority of this group is currently out of our reach and awareness. Furthermore we need to learn more about the connection between this group and children who are born by street-connected mothers so that we may strategise around which roles different stakeholders can play in addressing this serious issue.
- The large population of young people tragically testifies that a high number of children have actually grown up in Mwanza streets without any service or programme having had a significant positive impact in their lives. Our experience tells us that intensive and specialised approaches are required for working with these young people, many of whom have become hard core and destructive.

This headcount was the first of its kind to be carried out in Mwanza, and even in Tanzania, and has therefore offered a great opportunity for learning. In order to track the number and situation of street connected children and young people over time, and to obtain further information about them, this survey will be repeated at regular intervals in the future. Based on lessons learnt from this first exercise, the next headcount we conduct in Mwanza will aim to better count children and young people who live full time on the streets through carrying out data collection during late evening/early morning. Furthermore, the next survey needs to have better coverage of female children and young people on the streets.

The availability of the numbers and analysis of this report provides the government, charitable organisations and international partners with valid data that can help us to conclude how existing

efforts for children on the streets need to be developed. This survey shows that the efforts and thinking of the non-governmental organisations behind this survey are largely on track – we currently provide a response for most of the groups counted even though this is not enough to provide assistance to all those in need. We hope that surveys such as this and others to come will help to inform where focus should be placed in national and local programmes, policies and implementation of law that targets children in general and specifically vulnerable children and those in need of protection.

10. ANNEXES

1. Areas Covered

The following areas/streets were covered during the headcount. These are the areas where children were counted. The selection of these areas was informed by the knowledge of streets workers as the areas where most street children in Mwanza are found.

Areas Covered	Time schedule
Igoma Stand and Market Nyakato National Stand Nyakato Market Nyakato Buzungura Stand Mabatini Mecco Stand Uhuru Mlango Mmoja Rufuji Mata Street Wamasia Area	8.30am-4.30pm
Rwagasore Road Pamba Road Makabuli Ya Waislam Bugarika Soko Kuu Sahara Stand Nyegezi stand Machijioni-Igoma Bugando	6.00am-2.00pm
Central Police Kamanga Ferry Mahakama Capri Point Railway Station Lumumba Road New Mwanza Hotel Seif Plaza	9.00am- 2.00pm 8.00pm- 10.30pm
Kirumba- Mwaloni Street Kirumba- Market street Kemondo-Traffic Light Simba Cafe	8.30am- 3.30pm

Kamanga Street Masai Bridge Custom Mirongo Street Mirongo Market Street	
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